

BTEC Bulletin

News from the [Business Transformation Executive Committee](http://inside.usaid.gov/BTEC/) <http://inside.usaid.gov/BTEC/>

October 2004 - Issue 21

BTEC Membership

Frederick W. Schieck, DA/AID
Chair

John Marshall, AA/M
Barbara Turner, DAA/PPC
Vice Chairs

Carol A. Peasley, Counselor

Bureau Members:

Mark Ward, ANE
Wade Warren, AFR
Gloria Steele, E&E
Mosina Jordan, LAC
Leonard Rogers, DCHA
Linda Morse, GH
James Smith, EGAT
Jon Breslar, PPC
Joel Starr, LPA
Jim Painter, PPC/RA
Steve Wisecarver, DAA/M
Tim Beans, M/OAA
John Streufert, M/IRM
David Eckerson, M/HR
Lisa Fiely, M/ CFO
Roberto Miranda, M/AS

Ex-Officio Members:

James Ebbitt, IG
Michael Williams, GC
Jessalyn Pendarvis, EOP
Harry Manchester, SEC
Marilyn Marton, OSD/BU
Linda Shovlain, CFBCI
Susan Wallace, PPC
Stephen Callahan, M/OMS



USAID Business Transformation Plan:

- Human Capital
- BSM
- Knowledge for Develop.
- Strategic Budgeting

Recruitment Initiatives Bring New Staff to USAID

The Agency is recruiting a record number of people in 2004 to replace its many retirees and increase staff size by 50.

Twenty-one people were sworn in as Foreign Service officers on September 7, 2004, bringing the number of career officers joining in 2004 up to 88. Another 85 candidates were selected for five year appointments.

The current recruitment drive started in earnest in 2004 when the Agency's Development Readiness Initiative was launched and Congress authorized more staff.

Promoting the Agency as an employer of choice and streamlining application reviews are priorities. To attract qualified job seekers, staff from HR and the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (EOP) is attending job fairs at universities and professional associations this year and next.

Use of an automated recruitment tool has resulted in greater HR efficiencies including substantial printing and processing cost savings. Applications are screened electronically before HR and technical specialists review them and select candidates to interview. Civil Service (CS) recruitment initiatives include the

(Continued on Page 2)

Program Performance Reviews Inform Budget Decisions

Results of eight program assessments within the Agency have provided USAID managers with needed performance data to make informed resource allocation decisions. These reviews were conducted using an OMB methodology to grade federal programs called Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART). OMB evaluators use a four-part questionnaire to classify programs as effective, moderately effective, adequate, ineffective, or results not demonstrated.

The PART reviews at USAID began in FY 2002 with assessments of Population, Global Climate Change, and P.L. 480 Title II Food Aid programs. USAID's population program received a rating of "moderately effective". The results of these PART reviews informed FY 2004 budgeting for population and global climate change in the environment sector.

In FY 2003, USAID moved from a sector focus to a geographic focus and completed a program performance assessment of the Latin American and Caribbean Bureau (LAC) region programs funded by Child Survival and Health (CSH) and Development Assistance (DA) as well as the Agency's Transition Initiatives program.

In FY 2004, USAID completed a program performance assessment of the Agency's Operating Expense and Capital Investment Fund accounts for management services. The Agency received a rating of "moderately effective" for OE and CIF due to recently implemented management reforms such as: use of performance information to make process improvements and information technology (IT) capital planning and investment control processes to improve the selection and oversight of IT investments. In addition, USAID conducted re-assessments of two previously "PARTed" programs in the LAC. Both the DA and CSH accounts significantly improved from their previously assigned assessment of "results not demonstrated" to "moderately effective".

(Continued on Page 2)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1	Recruitment Initiatives Bring New Staff to USAID
1	Program Performance Reviews Inform Budget Decisions
2	Mission Management Assessments to Begin Per New Business Model
2	Phoenix Takes Flight in Five Missions

(Recruitment Initiatives from Page 1)

re-instatement of a Contract Specialist Intern Program and USAID's participation in the federal government's Presidential Management Fellowship (PMF) program. PMFs are recent graduates of master's programs. USAID recruits junior Foreign Service officers into its International Development Internship (IDI) program from the nation's graduate schools, as well.

These hiring mechanisms are directed at filling critical skill gaps in Civil Service and Foreign Service positions. The Agency's recruitment initiatives support human capital strategic objectives as described in the [USAID Business Transformation Results Report](#) and also support the President's Management Agenda goals for [Strategic Management of Human Capital](#).

Phoenix Takes Flight at Five Missions

Five missions – Egypt, Ghana, Peru, Columbia, and Nigeria – went live with Phoenix, the new financial management system, on August 10th.

"The transition was smooth", said Lisa Fiely, USAID's Chief Financial Officer (CFO), because of the efforts of the missions' financial management staff, who had to "learn a new system while still meeting daily job responsibilities and working long hours that at times included weekends."

Phoenix has been supporting accounting transactions at USAID's headquarters since 2000. Now that the first five missions are using the system successfully, the Agency plans to roll out Phoenix to approximately 50 missions next year. Phoenix, unlike the current overseas Mission Accounting and Control System it replaces, is compliant with federal regulations. Financial transactions on Phoenix are posted immediately to a general ledger.

"We are taking the lessons learned from the pilot phase of the project and anticipate making some changes ... especially in the areas of training and user support," said Steve Crabtree, USAID's financial systems integration program manager.

On September 21, 2004, [Administrator Natsios taped a video message](#) about the deployment of the Phoenix system. In the video, the Administrator emphasizes that Phoenix "is not just a CFO project, it's not just a Management project. Every officer in every mission, even those involved in program management, must understand what the new system is, how it works, and how to use it, or we will not successfully implement it. It is not just the management people who have to be involved in this."

Deploying Phoenix overseas is part of the Agency's Business Systems Modernization initiative – a key component of USAID's business transformation plan.

###

[Minutes](#) of the BTEC meetings can be found on the BTEC website at <http://inside.usaid.gov/BTEC/>

Your comments and suggestions are welcomed. Please contact your bureau's [BTEC member](#) or nbarnett@usaid.gov. You may also contact us online at <http://inside.usaid.gov/BTEC/>

(Program Performance Assessments from Page 1)

USAID has taken a number of actions in response to PART findings completed through FY 2003, including increasing the use of common performance measures, improving the measurability of performance goals, and allocating funds more strategically. As of the end of FY 2004, USAID has assessed 60% of its programs using PART.

100% of federal programs are expected to be rated in time for the fiscal 2008 budget cycle. Members of the House Subcommittee on Government Reform plan to introduce a bill that would institutionalize some form of program evaluations similar to the PART.

Mission Management Assessments to Begin per New Business Model

The findings from a recently completed Business Model Review (BMR) recommend re-introducing overseas mission management assessments every five years to review how programs are staffed, structured and managed. Under the leadership of the Agency Counselor, Senior DAA's from the Bureaus and the Chief Human Capital Officer would meet annually to identify missions for review, key issues to address and manpower requirements for the reviews. These assessments begin in the first quarter of FY 2005.

The BMR report recommends that the Agency continue to "right-size" and "regionalize" program delivery, as appropriate, and provide linkage to Strategic Budgeting efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of central, regional and bilateral program operations.

The BMR looked at how well USAID is set up to carry out its development, humanitarian, and other missions; how quickly it can respond to new challenges; and how safely and effectively it operates in dangerous places.

The study's recommendations call for improving the coherence of cross-agency strategies including links to the National Security Strategy, the Joint USAID/State Strategic Plan and White Paper principles. Under a new strategic planning process, missions will continue to develop their own Strategic Objectives (SOs), but will choose from a standard menu of Program Components to describe the programming under each SO. Each Program Component will eventually have a common set of performance indicators to measure progress.

Did you know...

...that USAID recently released a [Business Transformation Results Report](#). This coincided with the publication of a [White House report](#) on the progress made on the President's Management Agenda. Each major cabinet department and agency also released its own report on results highlighting success stories and lessons-learned from implementing each of the PMA initiatives. To view these reports, go to: <http://www.results.gov>



The next BTEC meeting is scheduled for October 12th.